

CHILDREN'S MUSEUM NEWS

PUBLISHED BY

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART
FOUNDED BY EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY

No. 3

TOLEDO, OHIO

June, 1931

MORE LESSONS IN DESIGN

IN YOUR last lesson in design you learned to paint a figure from a Museum painting in flat color and good proportion. The very way you copied a figure in the Museum painting is the way you work to draw any person. Ask your sister or brother or a friend to stand up and pose as your model. Make first your root five rectangle with the dynamic lines on which the head, shoulders, hips, knees and feet come. Look carefully and draw the outline of your model in clean neat pencil strokes. Half shut your eyes and draw the outlines of big simple shadows. Mix your paints in colors that are not too strong and not too weak, and paint carefully in flat planes. You will have made a full length portrait of your friend.



STUDY OF FIGURE FROM MODEL
Betty Stechschulte Age 12

In this next problem imagination is the thing. In class you and your teacher will name

twenty subjects such as dawn, fire, sport, winter, spring, fall, summer, games, travel, wind or the name of a color which is beautiful. Choose the subject which interests you the most. You are going to illustrate the word you have chosen. Think hard of what the subject means to you. This may be the figure of a person, so draw once more your dynamic root five rectangle, to give you true figure proportion. You will have a quiet pose for quiet words, a figure full of action to illustrate gay or dramatic subjects. Draw in pencil outline your imaginary figure, and draw in the shadows. Do you remember related and complementary color? Related colors are quiet, complementary colors suit dramatic figures.

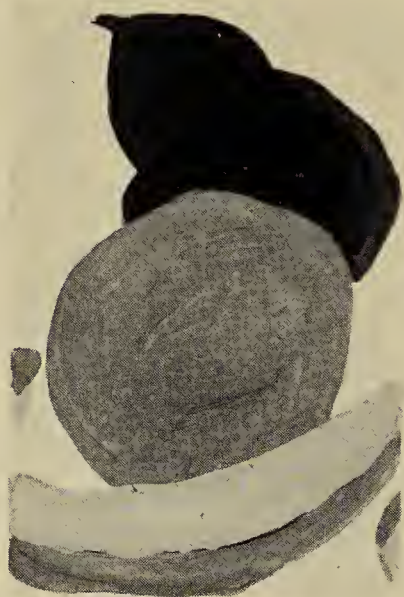


SKIING - ORIGINAL FIGURE
Mary Lavan Age 12

The next problem is a surface pattern like the first problem excepting that the motif is not abstract nor is it to be from an object of beauty in the Museum, but chosen from a table full of common objects such as hats, locker keys, ink bottles, pens, pencils, compasses, string, thread, tacks, nuts, needles, puffed rice, in fact anything that you can think of that you cannot imagine using for a design. You draw your motif from one or two of these objects. You

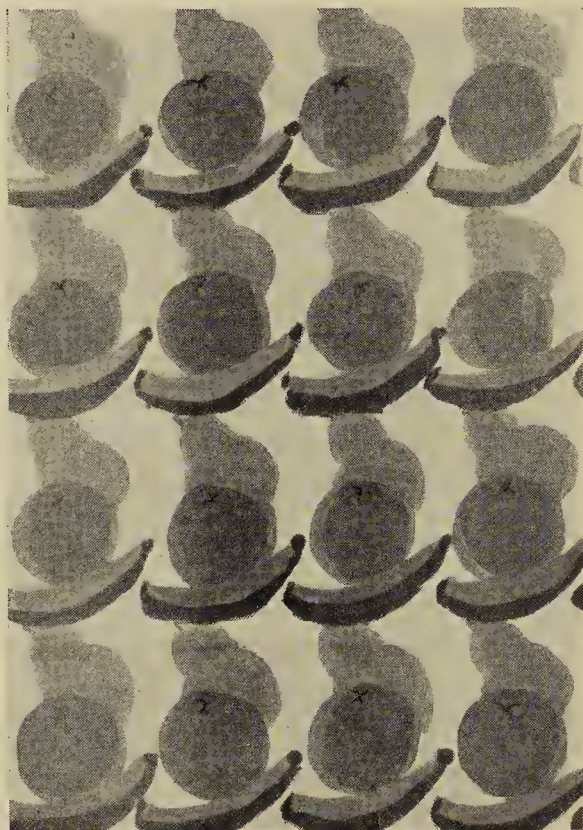
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know much more about color and composition than you knew when you did your first motif. You can imagine how this is going to look in color.



MOTIF FOR SURFACE PATTERN
Eleanore Szezepahska

The next time you repeat this problem sixteen times as you did the first abstract motif and then you paint it, using all that you have



SURFACE PATTERN

learned about color and arrangement. Now you have made a lovely surface pattern, beautiful enough for shimmering silks, to be made into gowns for great ladies, cotton prints for every day, chintzes and cretonnes for window draperies. All from such common things, just because these things are beautifully arranged and used! You are quite surprised when you find that it is not necessary to have great and costly objects with which to create beauty. Selection, order, color harmony, repetition and rhythm will create beauty from the simplest forms.

In the last problem you used all the rules you knew to design something beautiful. Now you must learn a new way to see and make beauty. You know what balance is, how important it is not to lose your balance and fall over. Balance in art is just as important, or a design or picture will tip to one side and you will be uncomfortable to see it falling. There are two kinds of balance, which you can study if you stand in front of a mirror. Face the mirror with your arm straight out to the side from your shoulders. You look like a big cross and you illustrate symmetrical balance. Symmetrical means alike on both sides.



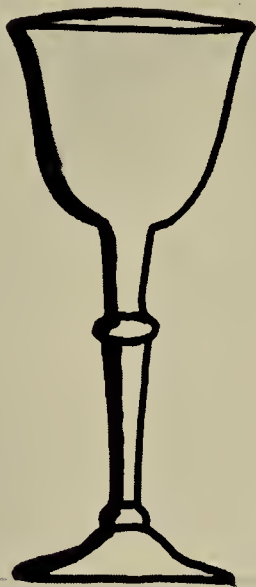
ASYMMETRICAL BALANCE
FROM SCULPTURE
TIGHT

UNSYMMETRICAL BALANCE

Now stand sideways before the mirror. You are still balanced because you do not fall over. You illustrate unsymmetrical balance, balance that is not alike on both sides.

Go up in the Museum galleries and find six examples of the two kinds of balance. Sketch each object neatly in outline. Choose the best of your drawings. Place a large rectangle at the top of the sheet and a small one below.

In your upper rectangle redraw your best illustration of unsymmetrical balance with a speedball pen and black ink. This will give you a decorative outline, and will show you how handsome a simple drawing can be made. In the small rectangle draw in the one or two main lines of your object. This will look like the skeleton of your upper drawing and these two or three lines will show you the balance lines. Make another sheet in this way to show your symmetrical balance.



SYMMETRICAL BALANCE
BALANCE CALIPY

SYMMETRICAL BALANCE
Rose Rozanski Age 15

When you have mastered these simple lessons of the first course in Color and Design, you can do many things with the principles which you have learned, and next year you can go on into the second year class.

THE WEAVING OF TAPESTRIES

YOU have come to know something of tapestries—of their use and of their beauty of design and color. You have also seen that in the fifteen hundreds the people of Europe became very much interested in the old Greek and Roman stories, which the artists designed for the tapestries.

You know our tapestry story showing the brave Meleager who called the heroes of Greece together to help rid his father's domain of the wild boar which was sent by the jealous Artemis, to ruin the country of Calydon.

Do you remember the way the story goes and the way in which it is set forth, the important events of the story pictured in various parts of the tapestry which hold together and balance perfectly? And do you remember the lovely colors, the red-orange, the blue-green and greyed yellow, used over and over again? And do you recall the armor of the heroes, the costumes and the ornaments of gold and jewels worn by these people of the story? The costumes were really those worn in Flanders in the early fifteen hundreds when the tapestry was made, while the story is an old Greek one, as you know.

You must be desirous of knowing how tapestries were made. Of course people had made tapestries for hundreds of years before ours was woven so it was already an old art. Tapestries are woven on looms, you know. There are two kinds, the high-warp and the low-warp loom. The high-warp loom was the earlier and the simpler type.

Tapestry weaving is really not difficult to understand. In fact with care and patience you yourself can really make little looms and learn to make tapestries.

The first thing, of course, is to make the loom, which is not hard at all. You must decide on the size and shape. The golden rectangle which you have been learning about in the lessons on proportion would be a beautiful shape. Why not use it? Having decided on this point, you will want to choose four smooth flat strips of wood, one for each side of your rectangle; these you will now join together, making the frame of your loom. Into the shorter top and bottom strips you will drive little tacks quite firmly, about eight of them to each inch, having them all exactly the same distance from one another, and being very careful to have them match, end for end. Now

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number your tacks beginning at the left, 1-2-3-4-, etc., so that the same numbers are opposite one another, across each end. This is your loom and you are now ready to string your warp on these tacks. You will want strong, and quite heavy thread for the warp. Linen carpet thread is excellent, for it does not break and it wears well. If you do not have it, a strong twine could be used, but be sure of its strength. Now string this warp from tack to tack, 1-1, 2-2, 3-3, etc., from top to bottom of your frame, pulling firmly and winding around each tack so that the warp is secure. When this is finished your warp threads are parallel to each other, running the length of the loom, and are all smooth and firm.

Now you are ready to make a simple design, observing in it the laws of form and color.

You will want to choose something you like very much for your subject for it is always so much more fun to work with what you enjoy, isn't it? Why not do a design of a game or of something in the Museum which you enjoy? Be sure to make your design so that the vertical of it will be on the short side and the horizontal of it on the long side of the loom. Your design should be drawn on strong paper with careful attention to your outlines. Now within these outlines which you have drawn, paint in your colors, choosing them carefully as did the Gothic artist-weaver of so many years ago. When you have painted your colors within your outlines, you will tack your design on the back of your loom, so that you see your picture through, or back of, the threads of warp. You will notice that these warp threads run across your picture, making strong *ribs* on which you are going to build your color. Now the Gothic weaver often drew the outlines of his design on the warp threads, with India ink to guide him, and you will find it will be a help to you in following your design.

For weaving, you will need a coarse comb, and one or more bodkins. The Gothic weavers had bobbins, but the bodkins will do very nicely.

And now you will want to choose your colored materials to match the colors of your design. The old weavers often dyed their own, and they were careful to see that the colors would not fade. Coarse wool yarn is possibly better than anything else, but other materials could be used instead. The coarse wool yarn is to be threaded in your bodkin. The colored

material which you will weave through your warp is called the weft. Now hold your loom upright, with the warp threads vertical, and towards you, so that you can see your picture through them. See that the bottom of the picture is towards your left hand. You will begin to work at the lower left-hand corner of your loom, so you must have the color in your bodkin match the color in this corner of your design as you see it through your warp.

With your left hand lift your odd warp threads, 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, etc., leaving the even ones as they were. This makes a channel between the even and odd threads through which you run your bodkin with the weft yarn, going only to the outline of the color your are using. Do not jerk it, but pull it through carefully. When this is done you release the threads you have been holding and with the comb which should be always within reach, you press gently but firmly towards the bottom of the loom. This is called "pressing home the weft."

Again with left hand you lift the warp threads, but this time it is the even ones, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, etc., again making the channel through which you will run your colored weft thread back to the left side where you began. Again you press home the weft with the comb. And this is the way you continue to work, lifting first odd and then even threads making little channels for your beautiful colored weft, pressing home the weft, until your spot of weft color on your warp matches that on your design. You will want to fasten your yarn carefully when each spot of color is finished. Since you fasten your weft on the side next to you, you will of course have many loose ends of colored yarn. But do not be disturbed, for this is the wrong side of the tapestry. When you have filled in your last bit of color and have fastened your last thread, you will be ready to remove the tapestry from the frame and see the *right* side. Now tie your warp threads together, two by two, to keep the weft threads from pulling apart or ravelling out. Now you are finished with your first work as a weaver. How beautiful the right side is, all smooth and firm in happy color. Isn't it thrilling to find that, with patience and care, you too, can make a tapestry in the same way as did the weavers of Gothic times, on high-warp looms? And who knows but that some day you may be a great weaver, making tapestries that will be beautiful for hundreds of years.